address systems, aircraft operations, railway operations, construction activities and bursting of crackers.

(v) Monitoring of ambient noise levels for seven cities namely, Delhi, Jaipur, Bombay, Madras, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Kanpur and Calcutta has been carried out by the Central Pollution Control Board.

(b) Breach of prescribed standards does occur.

(c) The Indian Council for Medical Research has conducted a study on Prevelence and Aetiology of Hearing Impairment. A total of 11,665 persons were examined in rural areas and 10,935 persons in urban areas at four centres i.e., Calcutta, Delhi, Madras and Trivandrum. The study indicates that population working in noisy areas for more than 10 years was found to have an increased prevelence of hearing loss in comparison to those who have worked for lesser number of years.

टेलीफोन उपभोक्ता संगठनों द्वारा दिये गये सुझाव

*158. **सरदार जगजीत सिंह अरोड़ा :**
श्री राम जेठमलानी :

क्या संचार मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार का ध्यान 30 जनवरी, 1991 के 'फाइनेंशियल एक्सप्रेस' में "कंज्युमर ग्रुप्स फेवर प्राइवेटाइजेशन" शीर्षक के अन्तर्गत प्रकाशित समाचार की ओर दिलाया गया है ;

(ख) यदि हां, तो क्या यह सच है कि विभिन्न शहरों के टेलीफोन उपभोक्ता संगठनों ने वर्तमान टेलीफोन प्रणाली के संबंध में शिकायतें की हैं और इस संबंध में कुछ सुझाव भी दिये हैं ;

(ग) क्या सरकार ने इन सुझावों के संबंध में कोई निर्णय लिये हैं; और

(घ) यदि नहीं, तो उसके क्या कारण हैं ?

संचार मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (डा० संजय सिंह) : (क) जी, हां।

(ख) और (ग) प्रचालन एवं विकास संबंधी जरूरतों, उपभोक्ता की आवश्यकताओं तथा वित्तीय विवक्षाओं आदि को ध्यान में रखते हुए दूरसंचार विभाग के लिये अति उपयुक्त संगठनात्मक ढांचा तैयार करने की सिफारिश देने के उद्देश्य से एक उच्चस्तरीय समिति का पहले ही गठन कर दिया गया है। समिति ने अभी अपनी रिपोर्ट प्रस्तुत करनी है।

(घ) प्रश्न नहीं उठता।

Proposal to establish a cultural consulate of Portugal in Goa

*159. SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently received any proposal from the Government of Portugal to establish a Cultural Consulate in Goa to promote cultural activities there; and

(b) if so, what is Government's response thereto?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR): (a) The Portuguese Government has expressed interest in setting up a Cultural Centre at Goa.

(b) The matter is under discussion between the two sides on the basis of the standard guidelines of the Government of India and in terms of Article 54 of the Indo-Portuguese Cultural Exchange Programme for the year 1990—92.

Iraqi response to peace efforts

*160. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the reports appearing in the Press on January 15, 1991 to the

effect that President Saddam Hussein had indicated to the Japanese Leader of Opposition, Ms. Takako Doia, that he might consider a compromise in the Gulf if an international conference on a comprehensive peace plan in the area was convened;

(b) whether the UN Secretary-General also reported a similar response of the Iraqi President to the UN Security Council after his talks with President Saddam Hussein; and

(c) what steps, if any, were taken by India as a member of the Security Council in the light thereof to avert the war or later to bring the parties to the negotiating table?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. In his report the Secretary-General said that President Saddam Hussein told him under certain conditions and as part of a package deal. He would facilitate the Secretary-General's search for a solution if others permitted him to play a role.

(c) India persisted in its efforts especially at the Security Council to find a peaceful resolution to the Gulf crisis before the 17th of January, 1991, and thereafter to bring about an end to hostilities and even proposed a pause in hostilities in response to Iraq's offer to withdraw from Kuwait.

'Intelsat' Geo-stationary satellite

@872. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Link through the 'Intelsat' Geo-stationary satellite over the Indian ocean has been cut off;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) its effect on various spheres of India's communications link with the outside world apart from some of the domestic telecommunication and transmission problems?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI JAI PRAKASH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Question does not arise in view of reply to (a) above.

Plantation projects in the State of Himachal

873. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Himachal Pradesh Government have launched a new plantation project in the State;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) whether any central aid has been asked and given to the State Government by Central Government and if so, quantum thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (DR. SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY): (a) to (c) Presumably the reference is to the 'Van Lagao-Rozi Kamao' scheme announced by the Government of Himachal Pradesh.

All the State Governments had been advised to involve village communities in regeneration of degraded forest land on usufruct sharing basis, in accordance with the guidelines issued on June 1, 1990.

Government of Himachal Pradesh had also been advised that the "Van Lagao-Rozi Kamao" scheme should aim at securing involvement of village communities in regeneration of degraded forest lands in accordance with the stipulated guidelines. Details of the scheme finalised by the Government of Himachal Pradesh have not, however, been received by the Central Government. The State Government has also not asked for any Central aid for the scheme.

@Previously Unstarred Question 303, transferred from 26 February, 1991.